

What is claimed is:

1. A slider of a thin-film magnetic head comprising:
a medium facing surface that faces toward a recording
medium;

5 a substrate having a first surface that faces toward the
recording medium and is located farther from the recording medium
than the medium facing surface; and a second surface that meets
the first surface;

a thin-film magnetic head element located near the second
10 surface of the substrate and near the medium facing surface;

an insulating portion surrounding the thin-film magnetic
head element and having a surface that constitutes a part of the
medium facing surface; and

a medium facing layer located adjacent to the first surface
15 of the substrate and having a surface that constitutes another
part of the medium facing surface, wherein:

the substrate has a hardness greater than that of the
insulating portion, and

as the substrate and the medium facing layer are compared
20 in hardness, the medium facing layer has a hardness closer to that
of the insulating portion.

2. A slider of a thin-film magnetic head according to claim
1, wherein the medium facing surface has a concavity/convexity
25 for controlling flying of the slider over the recording medium.

3. A slider of a thin-film magnetic head according to claim 1, wherein the main material of the insulating portion and the material of the medium facing layer are the same.

5 4. A slider of a thin-film magnetic head according to claim 3, wherein: the substrate is made mainly of aluminum oxide and titanium carbide; the insulating portion is made mainly of alumina; and the medium facing layer is made of alumina.

10 5. A slider of a thin-film magnetic head according to claim 1, wherein: the substrate is made mainly of aluminum oxide and titanium carbide; the insulating portion is made mainly of alumina; and the medium facing layer is made of diamond-like carbon.